





# MAKE HOLIDAY TIME QUALITY TIME

How to manage your time in a busy season. Avoid stress this holiday season. If you find yourself frazzled and overextended during the holidays, try to employ some of these time management strategies. Regain control and recapture the joy of the holidays this year!



## Make a list.

Divide a page into three columns, with the headers "have to do," "want to do" and "can wait until next year." List out your "to-dos" under the appropriate columns and put your "next year" items on hold until after the busy season subsides.

## Be selective.

Stop the mad rush of preparations and activities by evaluating your list. If your "have to do" column outweighs your "want to do" column, try making your list more manageable by eliminating the non-essential activities or finding faster means for achieving the same end.

## Get a move on.

Start early. Spread the mood of the season over several weeks or months, instead of packing it into a week. For example, if you usually host your family's Thanksgiving dinner, get your menu set early and figure out which dishes can be made in the days or weeks before the day of the feast.

## Enlist some help.

You don't have to do everything yourself. Every successful manager knows the importance of delegating in order to accomplish goals. Take the same approach during the holidays by enlisting family members in cleaning, decorating and baking tasks, or consider hiring some help.

## Get online, not in line.

Beat the crowds at the mall by purchasing some (or all) of your gifts online. The advantages? No lines, no store hours and many online retailers offer free shipping during the holidays.

## What's the rush?

Review your list if you feel your stress level rising. Identify tasks that can be grouped and accomplished together—such as shopping for gifts and running errands—in order to make the most of your time.

## Schedule time for fun.

Take the time to do the things you really enjoy this season, whether it's having a game night with your family, meeting a friend for lunch or simply taking a long, relaxing bath. The best way to make time for yourself? Schedule it into your calendar as if it were a regular appointment.

## Plan ahead.

By using the strategies listed above, you should have some energy reserves remaining after the holidays to take advantage of post-season sales. Get a head start on next year by accomplishing some of your "to-dos" 364 days early!



# MAKING TIME FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

(Even when you think you don't have it.)



Between late meetings, sporting events and volunteer commitments, sitting down together with friends or family for dinner can be a rare thing. Researchers say that youths who regularly eat with their families are less likely to misuse alcohol and other drugs, have less stress, eat healthier and get better grades in school. So, how do you make time? Read on for some simple and creative solutions for connecting with friends and family.

## Game Night

Schedule one night a week (or month) for letting loose and playing games with family or friends. Games are a great way to blow off stress and can also provide insight into things you didn't know about the people you're playing with.

## Send Mementos

Have a young niece or nephew across the country that you don't get to see very often? Make a recording of yourself reading a letter or a children's book and send it to them—it's a sweet and personal way to let them know you're thinking of them.

## Go Digital

Create an online photo album that everyone in the family can access and post photos to. Sites like [Kodakgallery.com](http://Kodakgallery.com), [Shutterfly.com](http://Shutterfly.com) or [Snapfish.com](http://Snapfish.com) are easy to use, free to join and the perfect way to share birthday party photos, vacation snapshots and even old, scanned in portraits of relatives.

## Share a Book

Connect with long-distance friends by sending your favorite books back and forth. Encourage everyone in the group to write their insights and ideas in the margins or on Post-it notes. Even though you may be far away from each other, you can still tap into their thoughts and learn more about them in the process.

## Create a Ritual

Make meetings with friends or family a standing event. Whether it's weekly, monthly or annually, you're more likely to avoid scheduling problems and procrastination when visits are scheduled consistently and regularly.

## Multi-task

Make your workout time do double duty by asking a friend or family member to join you. By having a standard workout scheduled, you'll also be increasing your accountability and will be more likely to stick to your aerobic intentions. Now that's a healthy relationship!

## Great family-fun items:

- DVDs of family movies
- Football, basketball, soccer ball or baseball to play with outdoors
- Arts and crafts supplies
- Easy-to-make recipes to cook together
- Songbooks for sing-alongs
- Seeds, pots and a watering can to work in the garden
- Board games

## A card for every occasion.

Email. Voicemail. How many ways are there to send a birthday greeting? No matter how many greeting card options we're presented with, nothing beats a card sent the old-fashioned way, but it does take a little more planning and foresight to make this happen. So when you go to the store to buy a birthday card, buy enough to last the whole year. Keep them stored with your calendar with stamps, and you'll never miss another birthday again.

